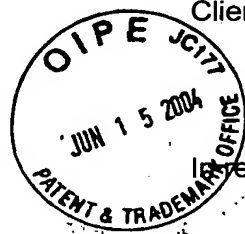


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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE PATENT APPLICATION OF

MODDERMAN et al.

Confirmation No. 8925

Application No. 10/686,641

Group Art Unit: 2851

Filed: October 17, 2003

Examiner: Peter B. KIM

FOR: OFF-AXIS LEVELLING IN LITHOGRAPHIC PROJECTION APPARATUS

* * *

June 15, 2004

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

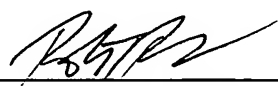
In response to the Office Action dated May 21, 2004, Applicants elect Group I, claims 1-10, with traverse. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any non-elected claims in a divisional application at a later date.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claims 11-15 is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one group of claims would necessarily encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be performed without serious burden. M.P.E.P. § 803 clearly states that "[i]f the search and examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on its merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Prompt and favorable examination on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
PILLSBURY WINTHROP LLP

By: _____


Robert C. Perez
Reg. No.: 39328
Tel. No.: (703) 905-2159
Fax No.: (703) 905-2500

P.O. BOX 10500
McLean VA 22102
(703) 905-2000
30460661v1